



Bulletin of the International Association *of Lyceum Clubs*

www.lyceumclubs.org

BULLETIN Nº 56 – April 2020

CONTENTS

Editorial of the International President
Website
News from the Clubs

EDITORIAL

How quickly time flies! It is already eight months since you elected a new team! It is really a team, which works together and share its concerns, in order to bring better answers.

Our main concern was to contact the federations. What a diversity! It makes the Lyceum club wealthy! Between the Children Resort managed by the Cypriot federation, the involvement of some Italian clubs into the life of their town, the commitment of the Athens club in the preservation of the traditional Greek costume and the generosity of the NZ and Morocco clubs, there are many differences, but a very strong link between women: the development of friendship links between our clubs. It is our DNA and we need to take care of it.

We have supported many projects to create new clubs, helping with the wording of their statutes (Moscow is the latest one). We also worked on the wording of new international Statutes., and we helped some federations to improve their Statutes as some of them were very old.

Of course, the President's duty was to encourage our friends in Lisbon who had prepared the next Cultural meetings with dynamism, determination and much hard work.

As you all well know, the unusual circumstances due to the global health crisis unfortunately led us to cancel the event.

But it is just a matter of time thanks to both the Rabat Lyceum Club who kindly offered to defer the preparations for the next Congress under way until 2022 and the Lisbon Lyceum Club who will not give up and will welcome us all in May 2021.

A great many members registered for the 2020 Cultural Days and the Board members all look forward to meeting you there.

It has been a real pleasure to work with the Lisbon Club and I would like to thank them warmly. They have been terribly disappointed. They've shown a great commitment to the Lyceum and deserve our appreciation for it.

Friendly yours
Muriel Hannart
International President
ialc.president.lyceumclubs.org



Website

The website www.lyceumclubs.org is being continually updated so you are encouraged to view it regularly. Consult it for: information about the Lyceum founder Constance Smedley; Contact Details; Cultural Days and Congresses; the List of every Lyceum Club and their websites (if available); History of Lyceum; all about Lyceum: Mission, Philosophy, Statutes, Governance, Guidelines; International Central Bureau (BCI); Photos; Bulletins.



You will find the link for information about the Lisbon Cultural Visit in May 2021 on the home page.

Several web pages are for members only and require a password. This will change on 1 July as usual and will be available from national and Club Presidents or the Web Manager.

Marion Jones, IALC Web Manager
ialc.webmanager@lyceumclubs.org

NEWS FROM THE CLUBS

Australia

The Brisbane Lyceum Club continued to celebrate its centenary year in style. In October, the annual Lyceum Lecture was held in the Customs House, Brisbane. Mrs Coleen Andrews, President, welcomed Dr Marilyn Mackinder, the Vice President of the Southern Hemisphere, who had travelled from New Zealand to join local and inter-state members and guests for a sumptuous dinner and lecture. Musical entertainment from three talented guests helped create a memorable evening. After dinner, esteemed Brisbane Club Member, Professor Mary Garson, spoke passionately about the changes to women's lives throughout the past century. Mary spoke about the careers available to women during this time and how women had come to the forefront in science.



Despite a devastating bush-fire season that touched the lives of so many in Australia, Lyceum activities provided an important distraction. Thank you most sincerely for your kind wishes to Australian Lyceum Members, their family and friends.

In early December, the President of the Sydney Lyceum Club, Dr Christine Jennett, presented the UNSW Chemical Engineering Honours Thesis Poster Award of \$1,500 which was shared by two students. Later that month, she attended the Conservatorium High School's 2019 Speech Day to present the Club Award of \$1,000 to the Year 12 student for an outstanding achievement in Music Performance.



In late January, Lyceum Clubs re-opened after the extended summer recess. In Adelaide, Mrs Janet Gould, President, welcomed Dr Marilyn Mackinder, the Vice President of the Southern

*Adelaide Lyceum from left to right in back row: Di Campbell OAM, Secretary; Angela Gordon, President; Julie Brownell, Treasurer.
Sydney Lyceum from left to right in the front row: Ann Cairns, retiring Secretary; Hilary Cairns, retiring President; Margie Kennard, retiring Treasurer*

Hemisphere, as well as the three Members of the outgoing AALC Secretariat from Sydney to the Re-Opening Luncheon.

The following day, Dr Marilyn Mackinder took part in the official hand-over meeting between the Sydney and Adelaide teams. All present welcomed the opportunity to discuss the roles of President, Secretary and Treasurer in person. The AALC Secretariat remains in Adelaide for the period 2020-2022.

Angela Gordon, President of the Australian Association of Lyceum Clubs Inc.

Dear International Friends

We are in Brussels, confined as you are and taking advantage of the situation to enforce our mutual ties. With this in mind we have exchanged short messages, thanks to WhatsApp with Marie Claude from Italy and Silvi Chraibi from Morocco. These are both friends we met at the Stockholm Conference.

This period of confinement has made me conscious of the international appeal of the Lyceum. I hadn't basically felt this, having been preoccupied with reorganizing the Belgian Club to comply with the new laws.

It has taken one year to place the club in proper order: legally, financially and judiciously. It is worth mentioning that new laws have been passed in Belgium to avoid money laundering and illegal transferring of funds. Surrealism really does exist. Small Belgian Associations (like ours) are subject to the same laws as multinationals.

Our objective was to broaden our membership base. We started with a membership of thirty and we are now about sixty.

New members have organized wonderful cultural evenings.

- Nadja Allgeier, past President of "Femmes d' Europe" for the Northern Countries, has organized concerts and Art Exhibitions.

- Pauline Camacho Fielding, President of the Association for Mothers at Risk, organizes concerts, classic, baroque and jazz. She has organized many a private concert for the club.

- Chantal Lobert, President of the Chopin Foundation together with the Ambassador of Poland welcomed us to a Chopin candle-lit dinner at the Hotel Plaza, with the guest of honour, Mr. Jean-Claude Vanden Eynden.

Past members also have contributed to the expansion of activities:

- Fabienne Relecom organized a sublime evening in her home with the counter-tenor Dominique Corbiau, accompanied by five "baroque" musicians.



They revealed to us the life of the famous castrato Philippe Balatti, born in Pisa in 1682.

- Viviane Sweden organized a visit to the cathedral in Antwerp, where several Rubens paintings are hung, among them the famous triptych of "The Raising and Descent from the Cross". It has remained in the

cathedral and never been stolen due to its immense size of forty-three metres and hangs in the alluring Byzantine tower, a remarkable trompe l'oeil.

-Corinne Merguy invited us for a gala lunch at her home.



-Solange Thierry de Saint Rapt invited about thirty members to her home for lunch to welcome new members. The ambience was both warm and festive.

- Thanks to Frieda Lamberty, our treasurer, we had the privilege to attend a conference given by Hiippolyte Wouters, famous lawyer and writer, on the subject of Tocqueville.

- Francoise Lemaigre had us discover the Wellington Museum in Waterloo where we attended a conference on the revolutions of 1660-1789 given by the historian Edmond Dziembowski.

- Among the most memorable moments at the Club, Pascal Bruckner, French author, winner of the Renaudot Prize for 1997, and the Academy Goncourt Prize for 2020, presented a conference on the ideas for the Art of Living for Seniors. He had developed this idea in his book, "A Short Eternity". More activities will be revealed when you visit Brussels.

Claudie Gorse, President of the Lyceum Club of Belgium

Cyprus

Dear Lyceum friends,

We have very exciting news to share with you.



On the celebration of the 90th anniversary of our Lyceum Club, Tasoula Hadjitofi, a Famagustian Honorary member of our Club, presented her book “*The Icon Hunter*”, a riveting adventure into the world of art trafficking and an inspiring story about the pursuit of justice. In this powerful memoir, Tasoula Hadjitofi reveals her perilous journey orchestrating “The Munich Case” one of the largest European art trafficking stings since World War II.

The Icon Hunter is a story torn from the pages of Tasoula’s life, from the war that turned her into a refugee to her struggle to bring back sacred artifacts stolen from the churches in the Turkish-occupied areas of Cyprus and sold to traders or art smugglers in Europe, America and up to Japan, back to her homeland of Cyprus.

In her own words “Love may have been the impetus for me to relocate to the Netherlands, but it was destiny that led me, as a refugee from Cyprus, to settle in The Hague, the International City of Peace and Justice. I found my voice, once silenced by the consequences of war, as Honorary Consul to Cyprus in the Netherlands and as a representative of the Church of Cyprus, repatriating looted sacred artifacts”.

The story speaks of the plight of every refugee in search of their lost identity and warns society about the dangers of leaving their religious freedoms and cultural heritage unprotected.

Tasoula Hadjitofi is the founder of the NGO *Walk of Truth*, which raises awareness about the importance of preserving cultural heritage in conflict areas.



If you wish to find more about her work and become a culture crime watcher, we suggest you should log on to www.walkoftruth.org / www.tasoulahadjitofi.com

Valentine Thomaidis, Vice-President, Famagusta Lyceum Club Cyprus

France

Caen

The astonishing heritage forgotten to be found in the small churches in the Pays d’Auge:

Norman architecture and symbolic thought

To highlight the patrimonial quality of these small churches, and often to save them from being forgotten or destroyed, one first has to reveal the splendid ‘baroque style’ of their reredos surprisingly unexpected in such small churches. So we began our visit by discovering five small churches that were opened for us on this occasion. We pursued our research on the consequences from the point of view of the architecture examining the forgotten evidence, that the church forms the bridge between the sacred and the secular. The mentality which was symbolic of the period in Ancient times has inscribed itself in the construction of all these churches, however modest, the aim being to construct a tool which should inspire men both spiritually and physically.

The first conference showed us that a sacred geometry is one of the keys to the ancient science of builders. The axis of the building, generally West/East, is subtly defined thanks to the scientific orientation of the sun well known in Ancient times. The plan of the building, on this axis, is established based on a square shape but developed in a more complex pattern although consistent geometrically. The geometric figures are always symbolic based on the mysteries of the Christian religion. The reference to the proportions as found in Solomon’s Temple described in the Old Testament are additional.



The highlight of the introduction to the symbolic of these churches, was the visit of the chapel – *Sainte-Marie-aux-Anglais* – in the heart of the Pays d’Auge. Our lecturer showed us the surprising use of ‘magic’ batons with which we were able to detect the presence of water beneath the ground under the church.

Our Lycéennes did not experiment with supernatural powers, there is a real reason behind this demonstration. Like the dimensions of the church, the choice of site, nothing is haphazard. Why do we often feel at ease in a church? Because, between earth and sky, our buildings often distribute and diffuse a certain number of electric and magnetic impulses, earthly and cosmic. They are in particular always built on underground sources of water. The friction of water against the rocks radiates beams which reach the surface and make contact with the stones of the monument. In the same way as the steeple of church tower captures solar and cosmic rays and transmits them to the stones. The natural energy is concentrated thus inside the churches.

We have begun to realize that the builders in Ancient Times were producers of energy and they knew that this energy was a positive element for living species. A fascinating discovery symbolic thought and ancient knowledge of which our era has forgotten the key.

*Text by Mariette MEUNIER, translated by Carolyn DANDOIS
Lyceum Club International of Caen-Normandie*

Finland

Helsinki

The Helsinki Lyceum Club arranges weekly meetings in Finnish and Swedish languages in our own beautiful apartment. Twice a year we make an excursion to some interesting place. Here we want to present our visit to the new amazing and very special Helsinki Central Library Oodi. Libraries in Finland have always been very important, perhaps therefore our students' reading skills are among the five highest in the world and Finns are for the second time reported to be The World's Happiest people among 156 countries.



The Library is a living meeting place built in three floors with different special characteristics, based on the various possibilities it offers.

The Book Heaven on the third floor is a reader's paradise with a wide selection of books in 20 languages. You can relax on the sofas under the trees, reading books and magazines.

In summer you can sit on the large balcony. The library has a large collection of music, different console and board games. There is a play park which will tempt children and adults to spend quality time together or take part in supervised activity.

At the Urban Workshop on the second floor, you can create new things. At your disposal is a wide range of professional tools. With a laser cutter, you can cut and engrave utensils, jewellery and decorations you have designed. With the 3D printer you can make physical objects. Window decals and cloth prints are easy to make. There are sewing machines for repair work to embroidery. At your disposal are computers, printers, photocopier scanners and Wi-Fi. With a library card, you can borrow instruments like guitars, basses and synthesisers to use at the library studios. You can organise your own concert at Oodi. In the kitchen you can organise tastings.



On the first floor there is a cinema. In addition to classics it shows modern films as well as art films and alternative films.

Oodi is all of this, and even more, and available for all citizens and visitors. The excursion took us to a new level of understanding and seeing how our society is developing. It is impressive!

*Benita Tallqvist
President of the Finnish Federation and the Helsinki club*

Germany

Berlin



On 10 September, 2019 seventeen ladies from the Lyceum Club in Berlin departed on a trip to Bilbao. They were fascinated by the vibrant and architecturally interesting city, where they experienced an extensive cultural programme. They visited not only the Guggenheim Museum, but Guernica as well – the place which was born anew from its ashes; the cradle of the Basque Region; and which – thanks to Picasso -

became a symbol of peace. The ladies also went on an excursion to San Sebastian, walked a bit along the Road to Santiago de Compostela, and admired the beautiful churches of the area, as well as its impressive landscape. On 13 September, seventeen completely thrilled Ladies returned to Berlin.

Frankfurt-Main, Hofheim

For the International Lyceum Club in Frankfurt-Main (Hofheim), the year 2020 began with a highlight. On 10 January, the club gave a New Year's reception in the Schönborn Hall in the *Haus der Vereine* in Hofheim. The hall had been lovingly decorated with the first violet and white tulips by the president and several members. This enhanced a relaxed mood in the arriving ladies – which was further augmented by a glass of champagne.

In her welcome address, President Erika Partsch gave a lively overview of last year's activities, while the federation president, Dorette Schuppert, reported on the developments of the international group of Lyceum Clubs worldwide, the IALC, as well as of the convention in Stockholm. She also spoke on future tasks of the Lyceum Clubs and outlined the problems of the charitable tax-exempt status and its related situation to the planned admittance of male members to the clubs.

Finally, Christian Vogt, the mayor, gave invaluable insights into the political and cultural activities and workings of a city such as Hofheim. This obviously met with great interest from the ladies.

The latter part of the official programme was wonderfully framed by the piano music of the former scholarship holder, Leonhard Dering and the present one, guitarist Marcel Wollny. The afternoon came to a close with a glass of wine and finger food, which had been lovingly prepared by the ladies of the board.



Hamburg

On 28 January 2020, the plenary meeting of the International Lyceum Clubs, Hamburg took place in the presence of Dorette Schuppert, the president of the federation. After eight years of very successful work, President Ingrid Ansoerge retired from her position. She received extensive applause from the members, warm-hearted words of praise and a beautiful Hermes scarf.



As there were no volunteers among the members to succeed Ingrid Ansoerge, Dr Katrin Schmersahl was elected by secret ballot with an impressive majority (45 votes in favour, 3 opposed and 2 abstentions.) as the new president. Dr Schmersahl is a historian and freelance academic and had been in her role as lecturer, a close companion to the Lyceum Club for the past 12 years. She was responsible for the first six months of the Lyceum Club's 2020 programme, which she had organized attractively and with much variety. We send her and the ILC Hamburg our fondest wishes for the future. To round off this eventful afternoon, Ingrid Ansoerge invited everyone to a glass of Prosecco.

Dorette Schuppert, President of Association of the Lyceum Clubs of Germany

Italy



After a long silence, a meeting of the Federation of the Italian Lyceum Clubs took place in Florence on January 27th, 2020, organized by its President, Maria Claudia Bianculli, in the presence of Muriel Hannart, the International President and of Monique Gächter, Vice-President of the Northern Hemisphere.

A delegation of the Cremona Lyceum Club, with its President Laura Ruffini and some of its members, also attended the meeting. After the gathering, which was very productive, giving everybody an opportunity to propose new initiatives, the group was hosted at the headquarters of the European University Institute, where an exhibition on various female artists and on the women's movement in Europe had been arranged.

This exhibition was very successful with the Lyceum ladies, who then headed to Palazzo Adami Lami, the headquarters of the Florence Lyceum Club; the terrace offers fantastic views over the town and the River Arno.

Muriel Hannart informed all the members of the Florentine Club about the day's events and shared thoughts and suggestions.



Donatella Lippi, President of the Florentine Club, presented gifts to the International President, to the Vice-President of the Northern Hemisphere and to the delegation from Cremona.

This meeting was characterized by a great participation and lively brainstorming: The pride of being a member of the International Lyceum Club was tangible, as well as a deep sense of community, which was reaffirmed on this occasion.



*Donatella Lippi
President of the Florentine Club*

Morocco

The Rabat Lyceum Club goes into action against the COVID-19 sanitary crisis

Unfortunately, like so many other countries, Morocco endures the consequences of COVID-19. Since the outbreak of the pandemic crisis, our country has known an unprecedented wave of solidarity.

Indeed, the authorities, the private companies and the civil society have all gathered in an effort to fight against the impact of this sanitary crisis.



The members of the Rabat Lyceum Club have decided to join in the solidarity movement and take part in several national initiatives such as supporting "El Baraka Angels", a civil association which regularly organizes different actions (ex: humanitarian caravans) in order to help the people in need.

Therefore, we have provided this association with money donations (taken from the RLC's funds) in order to contribute to the national fight against poverty during the COVID-19 crisis.

The idea is to help the community while following the quarantine measures in regard of the confinement advocated by the public authorities.

All this work was made possible thanks to the help of the members and volunteers of El Barak Angels, who used their social network and friends to identify many families in need of immediate financial support. The targeted families were helped through money wires and money donations.

The main goal of these actions is to cover day-to-day food supplies, medicines for people suffering chronic diseases and to pay charges such as rent, water and electricity bills.

At the same time, other members of the RLC succeeded in raising funds to buy protection masks for hospital workers and sending food baskets (or money) to the sub-Saharan community refugees through the patronage of the Churches of Rabat.

Moreover, one of our members kindly started to sew protection masks, 500 of which have already been distributed free of charge to several associations and small shop owners.

Finally, since the confinement is being extended, we are seriously thinking of putting some of our cultural activities online, such as the book club.

Selwa Chraibi, President of the Lyceum Club of Rabat

The Netherlands

LC Amsterdam

The LC Amsterdam is happy to update you all and particularly those of you who visited Amsterdam for the Congress in 2016.



The Amsterdam club has 155 members and is currently successfully pursuing a policy of attracting younger candidates (between 60 and 65 years old) in an attempt to decrease the average age of our membership.

The plans for our 100th anniversary celebrations in 2023 are beginning to take shape but we also have a programme of regular events including monthly lunches with speakers talking on a variety of subjects, usually with 80-85 participants. Other activities and outings foster friendships between members. We have a newly designed website which is increasingly being used:

<https://www.lyceumclubamsterdam.nl/lyceumclub/>

Guided tour at Rijksmuseum garden – Louise Bourgeois

Jumelage/Twinning visit to LC Bretagne

A highlight this year was the visit in September to our twin club in Brittany. Twenty-four LC Amsterdam members were treated to an amazing programme by our Breton friends and hosts. We visited much of northern



Brittany including Dinan, Dinard, St. Malo, Paimpol, l'Île de Bréhat and

Guingamp, mainly driven by our very kind hostesses, but also travelling by bus and boat. En route we enjoyed delicious lunches.

On one of the evenings we were invited for home hospitality. The French are amazing when it comes to receiving guests and treating them to delicious food.

Muriel Hannart, the newly elected IALC



International president, joined us for a whole day.

Bettine Polak, our Amsterdam president, had found a copy of the original twinning document dating from 2009. She presented a copy to LC Bretagne's president, Marie Madeleine Roussel, and to the co-signatory Annette Robert.

To thank our hostesses for their wonderful reception we offered a luxury book edition celebrating 350 years of Rembrandt, to be circulated among the members. We have invited LC Bretagne for a return visit to LC Amsterdam in 2021. We are looking forward to their visit and to reciprocating their hospitality.



Janneke Feitsma-Wibbens, President of the Federation of Lyceum Clubs of the Netherlands

New Zealand

Otorohanga Lyceum Mah Jong Circle



The Otorohanga Lyceum Club established in 1947 has a current membership of around 90. Mah Jong is one of the Circles with up to 24 arriving on a Thursday afternoon to enjoy each other's company and pit their skills and memory, pairing, chowing and running to make hands learnt from the MAH JONG PLAYERS COMPANION compiled by Patricia Thompson & Betty Maloney along with those added from tournaments from around the North Island that some members attend.

For the past 17 years volunteers from the circle have organised an annual tournament, usually the weekend before Easter at the Otorohanga Club where up to 100 players have come from Auckland in the north to Tauranga

and Whakatane in the east and New Plymouth in the south, and places in between. Play is over 3 sessions with 45 set hands to choose from.

From 2003 -2018 sponsorship of \$500 was obtained from Freightlines, the Barker family owned large transport business which has since been sold. The proceeds, usually around \$1,500.00 were distributed to local charities, a total of \$20,000 over 16 years. Those benefitting - Kindergarten, Plunket, Fire Brigade, St Johns, Riding for Disabled, Harvest Centre for Youth, Foodbank, Parenting Education, Family Violence, Public nurse, Beattie Home for Elderly.

The Lyceum Club has been the beneficiary for the past 3 years as the Club has had a great increase in rent.

As Mah Jong is a Chinese derived game with a western influence we have always themed our Otorohanga tournament to the Chinese Animal of the Year. Last year it was the PIG and we gained sponsorship from the local Waratah Farm and Otorohanga Butchery who provided ham and bacon for prizes. This year is the RAT and ECOFX pest controllers are giving us "Bait" in the form of Cheese and Biscuits. An Easter egg is also the "sweetener for the day"



*Marilyn Mackinder, President New Zealand
Southern Hemisphere Vice President Lyceum International*

Portugal

The Lyceum International Lisbon Club welcomed the International President, Muriel Hannart in September, with the purpose of getting to know our Club and help us prepare the Cultural Days in May 2020. Those were very agreeable moments of work and gathering.

As it is the custom, our program includes guided tours and visits to museums (we had a guided tour of the Museum of Mechanical Music), tea gatherings with the presentation of a certain theme, the S. Martinho and Christmas lunches and a 3-day trip to Córdoba, Spain. A great number attended these activities.



Much to our satisfaction, the Club continues to grow. It was with pleasure that we welcomed and integrated a new member, Hèléne Destaerke, founder of the Lille-Flandre Club, who now lives in Portugal.

Next term a recurring new activity will take place – "Move for your health", consisting on a 1-hour walk in different locations throughout the city and its surroundings.

In the photo you can see the lunch our Club offered the International President last September.

Maria Teresa Abreu Matos, President of the Lyceum Club of Lisbon

Russia

Rzhev

This January, we suffered a great loss — Galina Aminova passed away on the eve of her 85th birthday. She had been in the club since its foundation and its president since 2014. It is hard to believe that she is not going to lead our club anymore.

She was so active and full of energy despite her age and poor health. Until the last day she continued classes with her students while taking part in the activities of the club. In December, she held her last meeting. She was happy in her professional life. She knew how to communicate with the youth and often invited her students to the club events. She wrote poems full of life wisdom. They were recited at the meeting dedicated to her memory. It is wonderful that her dreams came true. Firstly, two years ago, her one and only grandchild was born, which meant a great deal to her. She loved her very much and looked after her a lot.

Her second dream was fulfilled when in May last year in Stockholm our club was accepted as a member of the IALC and was allowed to be named Lyceum club International of Rzhev.

Galina Aminova was a positive, very friendly and open-minded person and we loved and respected her. It is not easy to replace a person with such a great experience and many connections with various people and organizations in Moscow and Rzhev. She gave a lot of herself to create and develop the club, so, we would really like to keep it alive.

In early March, our first meeting without Galina Aminova took place and it was successful. We discussed our plans for the year to come. Currently the club has two vice presidents: Valentina Gribanova, who has been a vice president for a long time, and Elena Burenina as a vice-president in charge of communication. As for the position of the President of the club we would like to elect a resident of Rzhev to enable a closer contact with the city structures.

A new period begins for the club now and we look forward to the future.



*Elena Burenina
Vice-President of the Rzhev Lyceum Club*

Sweden

The Stockholm club – the only Lyceum club in Sweden – started in 1911 on the initiative of Crown Princess Margaret (grandchild of Queen Victoria). We are quite large, having some 200 members. As the club has no meeting point of its own, meetings usually take place at the Museum of History once a month; a speech followed by tea and sandwiches. We also organise excursions, theatre outings and music events.

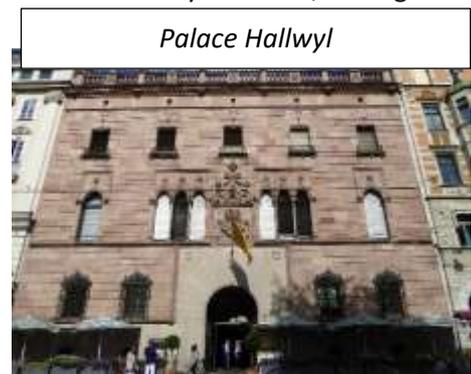
We have managed quite well to find interesting speakers and to vary the topics of different fields of subjects. Our events attract many participants. Some of the most memorable events:

= A popular speech was given on Girls' Schools in Stockholm. All schools in Sweden became co-educational from the 1960's. Many of our members had been to schools for girls only.

= The December meeting took place in the beautiful Baroque hall at the History Museum, ending our autumn term with traditional Christmas hymns and songs.

= For the first event of 2020 we had invited a Count and his Countess who have written a book, "Cows, Art and Love" and who run a large estate with a fascinating old castle (*Wanås*) in the south of Sweden. The artistic and charismatic Countess is well-known for her Sculpture Forest with works of art of contemporary international artists.

= In February we listened to a speech about three sisters von Hallwyl, children of a Swiss count and his famously wealthy Swedish wife, an eccentric collector. The sisters grew up in Stockholm in a private palace, today open as the Museum of Hallwyl showing the home carefully kept as it was with all the odd objects collected, big and small.



We thus managed to organise two meetings before the Corona Virus obliged us to cancel all events. The General Assembly was postponed to a later date after the summer. But we look forward to a member of the famous Bolin jewellery family, in due course telling us the history of his family during three Russian tsars in St Petersburg.

The Bolin company was established in St Petersburg in the early 19th century and moved to Stockholm just before the First World War. They mainly made jewellery for the Imperial family and worked with the Fabergé workshop.

Our book club is very lively and gathers some 15 ladies every six weeks, meeting in turns at members' homes. Due to the propagation of the dangerous COVID-19 virus all our club activities have been cancelled until summer, but will hopefully be back on the autumn program circumstances allowing.

We regret that the cultural days in Lisbon had to be postponed, but we look forward to the event next year.

Christina Bratt and Marie-Louise Lagergrén

Switzerland

We have twelve Lyceum Clubs in Switzerland, four in the French-speaking part of the country, one bi-lingual (in Bienne), five in the German-speaking region and two in the Italian-speaking region. Overall, the membership stands at 1353 members as of 31st December 2019. The clubs vary in size, from just under 40 members (Geneva) to approx. 250 members (Basel). Only one club owns its premises (Zurich, in a very prestigious location), others rent premises throughout the year and some only meet on certain days in a specific location. This means that clubs who have a permanent home can offer slightly different programmes to their members, most notably giving their artist members the opportunity to exhibit their works or to offer concerts at regular intervals.

All clubs offer a mix of language circles, conferences on a wide variety of historic and contemporary subjects, bridge meetings, excursions to places of cultural interest within their surrounding areas, guided tours to exhibitions and other social gatherings. Many of our clubs support promising young artists in their area, either with money or by offering them a platform to exhibit their work or give concerts. Most of our clubs have a large proportion of older members, but over the last 10-15 years we have been engaged in an ongoing drive to recruit slightly younger members, i.e. those that are close to reaching retirement age; these efforts are gradually bearing fruit. It is forever challenging to provide a club programme that offers interesting activities for the whole age range, but the vibrant discussions between members and the friendships that are formed within the Lyceum Clubs show us that we are doing something right!

The Swiss federation meets three times each year, twice in Zurich and once in Lucerne. A distinguishing feature of our meetings is that they are officially held in our three national languages, which means that each club president can speak in her preferred language, which encourages every participant to speak more freely.

The Swiss federation organises an international music competition every three years, which is mainly funded by the members. We will be exploring new pathways in 2021 by organising, for the first time, a jazz competition in collaboration with the four accredited music conservatories of Basel, Bern, Lausanne and Lucerne.

Another new project of the federation has been to host public literary readings, where young and up-coming writers who are studying at the literary institute in Bienne, join with an already well-known writer of their choice in a panel discussion where both writers give insight into and read excerpts from their works.

Both these latter activities serve to raise the public profile of the Lyceum Club and they fulfil the requirement in our statutes to support young talents.

Janet Blümli, President of the Lyceum Club of Switzerland



Muriel Hannart, IALC President
Marion Jones, IALC Web Manager
Annie Formont, IALC Secretary
Eva-Maria Sima-Meyer, Co editor